

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 OMB-01 HA-05 IO-13 TRSE-00 /095 W
-----028863 011001Z /21

R 310251Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9571
INFO AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 7182

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PORS, SHUM, IR
SUBJ: MORE RELIGIOUSLY INSPIRED VIOLENCE

REF: TEHRAN 7069

SUMMARY: VIOLENCE IN SHIRAZ AND ISFAHAN OVER PAST WEEKEND
HAS TOUCHED ON AMERICANS. THESE AND SEVERAL OTHER INCIDENTS
APPEAR TO HAVE STEMMED FROM MEMORIAL CEREMONIES LINKED
TO BURIAL OF AYATOLLAH KAFI. RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY TOUCHY.
END SUMMARY

1. SHIRAZ CONSUL TOMSETH REPORTS CROWD BROKE ALL WINDOWS
IN SHIRAZ IAS ABOUT 10 PM EVENING JULY 27. POLICE GUARDING
INSTALLATION RAN AWAY AND HID, FINALLY REPORTING
INCIDENT FOLLOWING MORNING. INVESTIGATION UNDERWAY.
CONSUL KNOWS OF NO OTHER UNTOWARD EVENTS IN SHIRAZ
IN PAST FEW DAYS.

2. ON JULY 28-29, ISFAHAN SAW MAJOR DEMONSTRATION AND
VIOLENCE, SOME OF WHICH COINCIDENTALLY AFFECTED AMERICANS.
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ACCORDING TO ANCONSUL MCGAFFEY, TROUBLE BEGAN EVENING
JULY 28 WHEN CROWD EXITED ABOUT 9:30 PM FROM MEMORIAL
SERVICE FOR AYATOLLAH KAFI AT WHICH MASHAD MULLAH'S
STATEMENT WAS READ, REPORTEDLY REFEREING TO "MASSACURE"
IN MASHAD. CROWN SURROUNDED PASSING GRUMMAN CO. BUS
AND BROKE SEVERAL WINDOWS, BUT THERE WERE NO INJURIES.

3. ISFAHAN CROWN THEN PROCEEDED DOWN STREET, BREAKING ALL WINDOWS IN 60-PLUS PARKED AUTOMOBILES AND CAME TO MAIN INTERSECTION NEAR U.S. CONSULATE. MOB INTERRUPTED TRAFFIC OVER NEARBY CITY BRIDGE. IN PROCESS, ONE AMERICAN'S CAR WAS SURROUNDED AND ONE WINDOW BROKEN. POLICE EVENTUALLY BROKE UP MOB AND CHASED PEOPLE AWAY, SUBSEQUENTLY CLOSING OFF CHAR BAGH ST., A MAIN DOWNTOWN ARTERY. CITY HAS REMAINED UNEASY FOR PAST TWO DAYS. CITY BUS DRIVERS ARE ON STRIKE, AND SEVERAL BUSES HAVE REPORTEDLY BEEN STONED. U.S. CONSUL REPORTS MULLAHS IN LOCAL MOSQUES HAVE BEEN MORE STRIDENTLY ANTI-STATE OVER PAST WEEK, AND VOCAL DISCONTENT HAS INCREASED. DEMONSTRATION WERE NOT RPT NOT DIRECTED AGAINST AMERICANS, BUT SOME HAVE BEEN CAUGHT UP AT RANDOM. CONSUL HAS SUGGESTED TO AMERICAN COMMUNITY THAT PRUDENCE DICTATES KEEPING CLEAR OF CROWDS.

4. ON EVENINGS JULY 27 AND 28, TEHRAN POLICE ARRESTED TOTAL OF 12 INDIVIDUALS FOR TWO DISRUPTIONS RELATED TO MEMORIAL SERVICES FOR AYATOLLAH KAFI, ACCORDING TO PRESS. OTHER SOURCES SAY NUMBER ARRESTED MAY HAVE BEEN SOMEWHAT HIGHER, IN 15-20 RANGE, WITH OVER 20 PEOPLE HURT IN MEMORIAL EVENTS. ONE SOURCE NOTED POLICE OBVIOUSLY READY FOR TROUBLE IN WAKE OF EARLIER OUTBREAKS (REFTEL).

5. ACCORDING TO REPORTS REACHING ISFAHAN, ON JULY 26
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CROWD IN RAFSANJAN (KERMEN PROVINCE) TRIED TO PULL DOWN STATUE OF SHAH. POLICE TRIED TO DISPERSE CROWD AND EVENTUALLY FIRED ON GROUP, WITH SOME DEATHS (NO NUMBERS GIVEN). EMBASSY HAS HEARD THIS STORY FROM TWO DIFFERENT SOURCES BUT HAS NO INDEPENDENT CONFIRMATION SPECIFIC DETAILS.

6. PRESS JULY 20 ALSO CARRIES STORY ABOUT DEMONSTRATION IN HAMADAN WHICH INJURED NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHEN POLICE PREVENTED FURNERAL CROWD FROM SETTING FIRE TO RED LIGHT DISTRICT. PRESS SAID TROUBLE BEGAN WHEN FUNERAL FOR AYATOLLAH MOLLAH MOLLAH ALI HAMADANI PASSED NEAR RED LIGHT DISTRICT.

7. CURRENT RUMOR MAKING ROUNDS IN TEHRAN AND MAJOR CITIES IS THAT DEATHS OF SEVERAL AYATOLLAHS OVER PAST FEW MONTHS MAY INVOLVE SOME OFFICIAL SKULDRUGGERY. FACT THAT ALL THOSE MENTIONED WERE IN THEIR LATE 80'S EXCEPT KAFI, PLUS LACK OF SUSPICIOUS STORIES AT THE TIME SUGGESTS DEATHS WERE NATURAL OR ACCIDENTAL, PRESENCE OF RUMOR SUGGESTS HOW TOUCHY POLITICAL-RELIGIOUS CLIMATE IS HERE AT THE MOMENT.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CIVIL DISORDERS, RELIGIOUS GROUPS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TEHRAN07182
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780314-0443
Format: TEL
From: TEHRAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978072/aaaaabfx.tel
Line Count: 117
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: f307586c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 TEHRAN 7069
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1883270
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MORE RELIGIOUSLY INSPIRED VIOLENCE
TAGS: PINS, PORS, SHUM, IR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f307586c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014